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OF
SASKATCHEWAN

JOHN BRACKEN
Federal Leader

RUPERT RAMSAY
Provincial Leader

The Policy

of the

Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party

PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS
302-304 GRAIN BUILDING, SASKATOON

AGRICULTURE

1. The Saskatchewan Provincial Progressive Conservative Party fully endorses the progressive and fundamentally sound agricultural policy as enunciated by the National Leader, John Bracken, in his speech at Lethbridge, Alberta, October, 1943, particularly with reference to the attainments of fair prices for farm products, by expanding foreign trade by means of progressively lowering the barriers to trade, and a policy of planned full employment for all who are able and willing to work.

2. We believe that equality for agriculture in this Province will ensure prosperity for all other groups in the Province, since urban prosperity is inseparable from rural prosperity. Moreover, we are firmly convinced that the implementation of the Bracken Policy of Federal financial assistance to the Province for rural education, vocational training, agricultural educational extension services, agricultural research and effective organization of farmers, will make it possible for the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party to put into operation sound long term policies which will raise the level of living on the farms of this Province to a basis comparable with that of urban people.

3. The future prosperity of agriculture in Saskatchewan, among other things, depends upon a well informed farm population. The present system of Provincial Department of Agriculture Fieldmen has definitely failed, for a number of reasons, to assist the farmer and the farm wife in applying the new knowledge in agriculture and home economics to their everyday problems.

We believe that the kind of educational program of greatest assistance to the farmers of Saskatchewan can best be provided by the Agricultural Extension Department and the Department of Women's Work of the University of Saskatchewan. We propose, therefore, to remove the Agricultural Fieldman Service from the Provincial Department of Agriculture and place it under the administration of the University of Saskatchewan where it will be permanently free from all political influence. Legislation will be introduced setting up an Agricultural Extension Service providing for:—

(a) All Agricultural Representatives to be men with practical farm experience and with special agricultural training. The needs of agriculture require a greater number of trained extension workers than presently employed.

(b) The place of residence and office of the Agricultural Representative must be in the area for which he is responsible.

(c) In addition to Agricultural Representatives, a number of full time Extension men and women, who are specialists in such branches of agriculture as, Agricultural Engineering, Farm Management, Poultry, Home Economics, etc.

(d) The final selection of a suitable Agricultural Representative for any one district to be in the hands of the farmers themselves, acting through their district Farm Bureaus.

4. The farmers in Saskatchewan, in the past, have had no official method of expressing their views on the planning of agriculture within their own communities, the Province or the Dominion as a whole. We propose, therefore, to remedy this situation by introducing a Farm Bureau Act, which will provide for the official recognition by

the Government of such Bureaus in the respective areas each covered by one Agricultural Representative. All the agricultural planning and other activities of the area will be centered in these Bureaus. Among the functions of the Bureaus will be the selection of the Agricultural Representative of the area, who will work through the Bureaus in planning the Agricultural educational-extension program of the area. The Agricultural Representatives will thus be members of the Extension Staff but also directly responsible to the Farm Bureaus.

5. Many young farm men and women each year take over the responsibilities of running a farm or home without the advantage of training in the newer knowledge of agriculture and home making. We propose to remedy this by setting up schools for Agriculture and Home Economics, preferably adjacent to Dominion Experimental Farms and Stations. These schools will give winter courses in practical agriculture and home economics for all young farm folks. Boarding schools will be run at cost and tuition will be free.

6. In order to speed up the work of removing submarginal lands from cultivation, we propose the following steps:

(a) The addition of a full time experienced and technically trained soils specialist to the staff of the Saskatchewan Land Utilization Board.

(b) To press for a Federal submarginal land purchase policy. Such a step would encourage the development of more community pastures which has practically come to a standstill because of the inability to obtain title to submarginal lands by present methods of acquisition.

7. We deplore the fact that practically one-half of all the northern settlers in the forest zone of this Province are left stranded on farms with such a small acreage of land under cultivation that they cannot enjoy a reasonable level of living. We shall see that development loans, supervised by trained, competent personnel, repayable on a crop share basis, are made available, where economically feasible, to these northern settlers, so that they may increase the area of cultivated land to the point where they can have a decent level of living. In order to keep costs to the farmer as low as possible, we shall see that municipal or Government owned power equipment is used wherever feasible.

8. Many years of agricultural distress in this Province have left their mark on the countryside in the form of a considerable number of broken-down, dilapidated farm buildings with no modern conveniences. We shall take active steps to correct this situation by co-operating with the Federal Government in providing for low interest rehabilitation loans, repayable on a crop share or other flexible basis, for farm building, repairs and home facilities.

9. It is our unalterable purpose to see that the farms of Saskatchewan have all the benefits of a rural electrification system. We recognize that because of the sparseness of our farm population the farmers alone cannot stand the full cost of a rural electrification system. We believe that, in the interest of equality of opportunity and national unity, some share of the cost of establishing such a service should be borne by the Provincial and Federal Governments. Upon forming a Government, one of our immediate steps will be to set up a competent rural electrification enquiry commission, similar to the one set up by John Bracken in Manitoba, charged with the responsibility of making a complete study of the whole problem.

Among other things, they will be asked to consider the alternatives of provincially or co-operatively owned system. As a postwar measure we shall take active steps to put into operation the considered recommendations of this commission.

10. We shall promote in every possible way the expansion of scientific research into methods of more efficient production and utilization of farm and industrial products, thereby increasing the material prosperity of the people of this Province.

11. We shall promote, in every legitimate way, the practice of co-operative enterprise in all its branches.

12. We pledge ourselves to proceed to set up a Crop Insurance plan which is feasible and in determining the mechanism of the plan we will consult and co-operate with other Prairie Provinces, the Federal Government and organized agriculture.

EDUCATION

1. A complete reorganization of the present system of financing education in this Province which at present consists of a series of stop-gap grants for different purposes in 5000 small school districts, is long overdue.

We shall reorganize the whole system of school finance and see that equalization grants on a systematic basis are provided, so that all children, in all school districts of the Province, have an equal opportunity to receive grade and high school education of a high standard. All farm boys and girls must have the same opportunity of free education as those in the cities.

2. In order to attract the best men and women into the teaching profession we shall introduce a system of salary scales with higher minimum salaries than at present. At the same time we shall take active steps to see that the general standards of teaching are raised.

3. The revision of the High School curriculum in this Province is long overdue. We shall take active steps to correct this by consulting with the Teachers' Federation, the Normal School authorities, the University authorities, School Trustees and the Home and School Club representatives.

4. We shall take steps to see that a province-wide system of educational and vocational guidance is introduced under the direction of trained personnel.

5. Because the economy of this Province is predominantly agricultural, we feel that it is necessary that both rural and urban boys and girls should have a sound knowledge of the basic principles of agriculture. We shall therefore take steps to see that each High School staff of this Province has one teacher trained in the science of agriculture.

6. As a post-war reconstruction measure we shall assist needy school districts in reconditioning and modernizing of their school buildings.

7. We shall revise the Teachers' Superannuation Act with a view to making its provisions more just for the teachers of long ser-

vice who have had little chance to provide large annuity contributions.

8. We shall introduce a system of University scholarships so that worthy students may secure higher education.

SOCIAL WELFARE AND INCOME SECURITY

1. We believe that the people of Canada should be assured, by measures of social protection, of national minimum levels of living which should be gradually increased with the overall increase in the national income.

2. We pledge ourselves to the creation of strong, competently staffed and separate Provincial Departments of Welfare and of Health, each complete in itself though presided over by one Minister.

3. Within this Department of Welfare, we shall consolidate in co-operation with the Municipalities, all our provincial machinery and provisions for the care and protection of children, aid to needy mothers, services to the aged, and assistance and relief due to any cause.

Specifically we pledge ourselves to:—

(a) Reorganization of our services for child neglect and protection; betterment of care for children born out of wedlock; more adequate provisions for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency; and for the development of wholesome leisure time and vocational projects in both rural and urban areas.

(b) Press the Federal Government to review the present Old Age Pension regulations with a view to making them more just. We shall increase the old age pension benefits and lower the age of recipients to 65.

(c) Complete reorganization of aid to needy mothers with dependent children. The present system of Mothers' Allowance is now the most inadequate in any of the Provinces. This we propose to place on a basis of actual need, similar to the Manitoba system.

(d) Closer co-operation with Municipalities to encourage combined "welfare districts" such as the Union Hospital for rural areas and well organized Municipal Welfare departments for the cities.

4. We pledge ourselves to develop a strong and effective health program, free from political influence, and to assure extended health services for all the people regardless of income. This will we do through the encouragement of diagnostic and treatment centres, of hospital accommodation to an agreed level, and by nursing care in the home at actual need.

These we will seek to develop in conference with representatives of the people themselves, the Municipalities, medical, dental and nursing professions and hospitals. We shall seek financial assistance from the Dominion in this health plan in order that the particular needs of Saskatchewan may be met in a manner which is practical for our own particular conditions.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ROADS

1. The supervision of grazing lands is an agricultural matter. We therefore propose to increase Departmental efficiency by removing the administration of all agricultural and grazing lands, other than grazing forest reserves, from the Department of Natural Resources.

ces and placing them under the Land Utilization Branch of the Department of Agriculture.

2. In the 14 years since the natural resources were turned over to the Province, no attempt has been made to plan, in a scientific manner, the long-time conservation and utilization of our natural resources. One of our first tasks will be to appoint a Committee of Enquiry on Natural Resources. This committee, among other things, will be charged with the responsibility of making a complete inventory of the forest, wild life, fish, mineral, petroleum, natural gas and land resources of the Province. They will be asked to lay out a long term plan for the conservation and utilization of these resources.

3. No forestry research work is presently being done in our northern forest region. We shall, therefore, press the Federal Government for the establishment of a Dominion Northern Forestry Research Station.

4. We shall press for the Federal Highways system in this Province to include at least two main routes east and west and one from the United States boundary to the Prince Albert National Park. We shall press for the hard surfacing of these roads so that Western Canada may take advantage of the great post-war, tourist traffic.

5. The present system of building and financing provincial and municipal market roads needs to be completely overhauled. We propose that the Government itself shall gradually acquire modern power road building equipment, and start building its own Provincial highways. If the Municipalities desire, this provincially owned equipment will be hired at cost for the construction of local market roads.

6. In order to provide for good market roads in areas of low productivity, we shall revise the whole present system of haphazard municipal road grants and introduce legislation providing for equalization grants on a systematic basis so that all municipalities, regardless of the level of their taxation base, may have adequate market roads. Municipal road grants must be removed from all political influence.

7. In the matter of the construction of main market roads consideration will be given to an equitable diversion for that purpose of funds received in revenue from the gasoline tax and Motor License fees.

8. We will offer special encouragement to coal and hard rock mining and endeavor to stimulate our great coal industry by education in its uses and by all other means.

INDUSTRIES

1. We will give encouragement to, and provide long term loans for, the establishment of farm machinery and equipment repair depots by returned men of the armed forces who enlisted from Saskatchewan and who are technically qualified for such tasks.

We shall provide the same kind of assistance for the establishment of local industries making use of farm products as raw materials which are sound and economically feasible, whether under private enterprise or co-operatively owned.

LABOUR

1. We believe that the fullest prosperity for all classes in this Province depends upon a sound and co-operative partnership between Agriculture, Industry and Labour to the end that all groups may obtain a just share of the national income.

2. We favour the immediate establishment by the Dominion Government under its wartime authority of a national labour code covering industry in all its branches and we shall press for the earliest possible action in this regard.

3. As a permanent policy, we believe that uniform labour relations should be established throughout Canada and we shall be prepared to co-operate with the Dominion Government in any way necessary to ensure this end.

4. We support the principle of collective bargaining as a desirable and necessary instrument to promote not only the interests of labour, but, as well, those of industry and of the people generally.

5. We believe that the responsibility for administration of any Act respecting labour relations should be vested in a Provincial Labour Board with equal employer and employee representation and with a chairman appointed to represent the public interest.

6. We believe that labour should be accorded representation upon governmental boards and commissions which deal directly or indirectly with matters concerning the interests or welfare of workers and that labour itself should be consulted in the appointment of such representatives.

7. We shall encourage and assist, wherever possible, the establishment of labour-management committees as a method of promoting permanently sound labour relations.

8. We shall submit the Provincial Minimum Wage Legislation to review by a Committee, upon which labour will be adequately represented, with a view to widening its scope and strengthening its administration.

CIVIL SERVICE

Employment in the Public Service must be removed from the sphere of patronage.

We shall establish a Civil Service Commission that will see that appointments to the Public Service are competitive and on the basis of merit.

The principle of preferment for ex-service men and women in the public service will be recognized.

In the opinion of this Convention the question of the rehabilitation in civilian life of our service men and women now and post war must receive the very first consideration of our governments, Dominion and Provincial, and we favour a preference in employment for them in the Public Service.

An Open Letter to The People of Saskatchewan

On February 16th, at the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Convention in Saskatoon, I was elected to the leadership of the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative party. As I have never sought, at any time, a political career, it came as a great surprise to me to be offered this great honor. After considerable thought I resigned from the University to accept this great responsibility. I have made this important change in my life in the hope that I may serve the people of this Province in a wider field than I have been able to during the past 15 years.

At the Convention in Saskatoon, about 300 delegates of the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party spent considerable time in discussing the new provincial policy. The policy as finally passed by the delegates accompanies this letter. I trust that you will find time to study this policy thoroughly and talk it over with your neighbors. This is a sane and practical policy of reform and when put into effect will make Saskatchewan a better province in which to live.

The people of Saskatchewan are tired of the delay in correcting the obvious weaknesses which have developed in our society. Today some people are inclined to grasp at any Utopian plan which makes great promises, even though it is untried and maybe dangerous to our democratic society. Socialism must eventually lead to planning and regimentation by Boards not directly responsible to the people. Such a system develops into bureaucratic dictatorship.

At the present time the Progressive Conservative Party has no elected representatives at Regina. This will not long be so. We are proceeding with our plans for the time when we shall be called upon to assume the responsibilities of Government.

Soon you will be given an opportunity of electing new men and a new party to represent you in Regina. When that day comes, do not forget that the Progressive Conservative Party pledges itself to give you clean democratic Government, responsible to the electorate and free from the deadening effect of patronage.

Sincerely yours,

RUPERT RAMSAY, Provincial Leader.

